

---

Week of May 15, 2000

Vol. XXIX, #13, Pt. III, May 17, 2000

---

J.C. Watts, Jr.  
Chairman  
4th District, Oklahoma

## **FY 2001 Transportation Appropriations Act** **H.R. 4475**

Committee on Appropriations  
H.Rept. 106-622  
Submitted by Mr. Wolfe on May 17, 2000

### **Floor Situation:**

The House is scheduled to consider H.R. 4475 on Friday, May 19, 2000. Appropriations bills are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed. At press time the Rules Committee has not yet granted a rule on the bill. Information on the rule and possible amendments to the bill will be included in a Floor Prep prior to consideration of H.R. 4475 by the House.

### **Highlights:**

H.R. 4475 appropriates \$15 billion in new budget authority for transportation programs in FY 2001, \$1.3 billion more than last year. Specifically, the measure allocates (1) \$30.7 billion for the Federal Highway Administration—a \$1.6 billion increase; (2) \$12 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration (a \$2 billion increase); (3) \$6.2 billion for the Federal Transit Administration, \$485 million more than last year; (4) \$689 million for the Federal Railroad Administration, a \$45 million decrease from the FY 2000 level; and (5) \$4.6 billion for the U.S. Coast Guard, a \$594 million increase.

### **Background:**

Transportation programs are funded through two different means: contract authority from trust funds and budget authority. Budget authority is the traditional means of funding a program—Congress either appropriates money from the general fund, establishes borrowing authority, or grants contract authority. Contract authority allows the Transportation Department to enter into contracts to pay for projects at some future date. Under this arrangement, authorized funds are automatically made available to the states at the beginning of each fiscal year and may be obligated, but are subject to obligation limitations contained in

appropriations legislation. Appropriations are then required to fund the obligated contract authority. Appropriation bills also may permit the release of money from various self-financed trust funds, usually by setting limitations on obligations.

There are currently over 170 trust funds in the federal budget which are mostly administrative in nature. Of these, 19 trust funds are funded through excise taxes and only the four transportation trust funds—Highway, Aviation, Harbor Maintenance, and Inland Waterways—pay for capital expenditures for infrastructure.

## Provisions:

### — *Department of Transportation* —

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is comprised of nine administrations, including the Office of the Secretary, the Coast Guard, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, and the Research and Special Programs Administration. H.R. 4475 appropriates nearly \$15 billion for DOT programs—almost \$1.4 billion more than last year.

#### Office of the Secretary

H.R. 4475 appropriates \$78.4 million, \$2.3 million more than FY 2000 and \$9.6 million less than the president's request, for the Office of the Secretary. This account funds the administrative expenses of the secretary; the general counsel; five assistant secretaries; the Office of Public Affairs; the Office of Civil Rights; the Office for Transportation Policy; and other administrative functions. Selected programs are detailed below.

**Salaries and Expenses.** The bill provides \$62.1 million—\$1.2 million more than last year and \$7 million less than the president's request—for administrative expenses and salaries. The bill caps the number of political appointees at 104 and stipulates that no political or presidential appointees may be detailed outside the Transportation Department.

**Office of Civil Rights (OCR).** The measure allocates \$8.1 million (\$586,000 less than the president's request and \$940,000 more than FY 2000) for the OCR to advise the secretary on civil rights and equal opportunity matters to ensure that all of the department's actions meet fairness and equity standards.

**Transportation Planning, Research, and Development (TPRD).** The bill provides \$3.3 million for TPRD, \$10,000 more than last year and almost \$2 million less than the president's request. TPRD finances research on planning, analysis, and information development needed to formulate national transportation policies. The funding decrease is accounted for by eliminating funding for several non-critical studies and initiatives.

**Minority Business Resource Center Program.** The measure fully funds the president's request for \$1.9 million (equal to the FY 2000 level) for program administrative costs and subsidies to help support

FY 2001 Transportation Appropriations					
Appropriation Account	FY 2000 Level	President's Request	FY 2001 Proposal	% Change from Last Year	% Change from Request
	(in millions)		(in millions)		
Title I — DOT					
Office of the Secretary	\$76.1	\$88.1	\$78.4	+3.1%	-10.9%
Coast Guard	\$4,022.1	\$4,608.6	\$4,616.5	+14.8%	+0.2%
Federal Aviation Administration	\$9,997.1	\$11,221.6	\$12,006.4	+20.1%	+7.0%
Federal Highway Administration	\$28,802.8	\$30,358.4	\$30,701.4	-100.0%	-100.0%
National Highway Traffic					
Safety Administration	\$368.2	\$499.5	\$394.9	+7.2%	-20.9%
Federal Railroad Administration	\$734.8	\$1,055.7	\$689.3	-6.2%	-34.7%
Federal Transit Administration	\$5,785.4	\$6,321.0	\$6,271.0	+8.4%	-0.8%
Saint Lawrence Seaway					
Development Corporation	\$12.0	\$13.0	\$13.0	+8.4%	—
Research and Special					
Programs Administration	\$67.7	\$85.1	\$76.8	+13.4%	-9.8%
Inspector General	\$44.7	\$48.1	\$48.1	+7.6%	0.0%
Surface Transportation Board	\$15.3	\$0.0	\$17.1	+11.2%	—
General Provisions	-\$14.3	\$0.0	-\$3.0	-78.8%	-100.0%
Rescissions	-\$32.1	\$0.0	-\$579.0	+1704.8%	—
Supplemental Appropriations	\$14,340.4	\$16,089.0	\$16,285.7	+13.6%	—
<b>Subtotal, Title I</b>	<b>\$49,879.8</b>	<b>\$54,299.0</b>	<b>\$54,330.7</b>	<b>+8.9%</b>	<b>+0.1%</b>
Title II — Related Agencies					
Architectural & Transportation					
Barriers Compliance Board	\$4.6	\$4.8	\$4.8	+3.5%	0.0%
National Transportation					
Safety Board (NTSB)	\$57.0	\$52.9	\$62.9	+10.4%	+18.9%
<b>Subtotal, Title II</b>	<b>\$61.6</b>	<b>\$57.7</b>	<b>\$67.7</b>	<b>+9.9%</b>	<b>+17.3%</b>
Total Adjustments	-\$104.9	\$7.0	-\$10.0	-90.5%	0.0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$64,508.5</b>	<b>\$70,770.7</b>	<b>\$71,021.1</b>	<b>+10.1%</b>	<b>+0.4%</b>

Source: House Appropriations Committee

\$13.8 million in loans to help disadvantaged-, minority-, and women-owned businesses obtain short-term working capital and bonding for transportation-related projects.

**Minority Business Outreach.** H.R. 4475 fully funds the president's request of \$3 million (\$118,000 more than FY 2000) to help minority-owned businesses secure contracts involving federal spending.

## U.S. Coast Guard

H.R. 4475 provides almost \$4.6 billion for the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), \$594.4 million more than in FY 2000 and \$7.9 million more than the president's request. Established in 1915, the USCG is respon-

sible for (1) enforcing federal laws on the high seas, (2) promoting life and property safety at sea, (3) aiding navigation, (4) protecting the marine environment, and (5) serving when necessary as a special service of the Navy in time of war. The measure includes the following funding levels for USCG activities:

- \* \$3.2 billion for operating expenses—\$411 million more than in FY 2000 and \$7 million less than the president's request. This account funds pay and allowances, depot level maintenance, operations and support, recruiting and training, centralized services and support, and account-wide adjustments;
- \* \$515 million for capital acquisition, construction, and improvement programs for USCG vessels, aircraft, equipment, shore facilities, and related administrative expenses (\$125 million more than in FY 2000 and \$5.2 million less than the president's request).
- \* \$16.7 million for environmental compliance and restoration programs—\$235,000 less than last year and equal to the president's request;
- \* \$14.7 million to alter bridges considered a hazard to marine navigation (\$203,000 less than FY 2000; the president requested no funding);
- \* \$778 million for retired personnel pay—\$47.6 million more than FY 2000. The president requested such sums as necessary for this account;
- \* \$80.4 million for reserve training, \$8.4 million more than in FY 2000 and \$7 million more than the president's request; and
- \* \$19.7 million for research, development, test, and evaluation programs necessary to maintain and expand technology essential to USCG's ability to perform its mission—\$691,000 more than in FY 2000 and \$1.6 million less than president's request.

### **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**

H.R. 4475 provides \$12 billion in budgetary resources for the FAA, \$2 billion more than the FY 2000 level and \$784.7 million more than the president's request. The FAA is responsible for the safety and development of civil aviation and the evolution of a national system of airports. Its primary activities are to run the nation's air traffic control system, establish and ensure compliance with federal aviation regulations, inspect aircraft, and administer a grants-in-aid program to finance airport development and construction. The aviation trust fund—created in 1970—is funded by taxes on passenger ticket sales, freight charges, and aircraft fuel. Its funds are used to reimburse airports for the costs of construction and improvement projects, modernizing air traffic control systems, and research. The bill fully provides the level of aviation spending stipulated in AIR 21.

**Operations.** The measure allocates \$6.5 billion, including funding from the Aviation Trust Fund—\$644 million more than in FY 2000 and \$48 million less than the president's request—to cover the administrative and managerial expenses of the FAA's regulatory, airport, medical, engineering, and development programs as well as the operation, maintenance, communications, and logistical support of the nation's air traffic control and air navigation systems. The measure prohibits funds in the bill from being used to plan or promulgate any regulation to institute any new user fee.

**Facilities and Equipment.** H.R. 4475 appropriates \$2.7 billion—\$644 million more than in FY 2000 and \$161 million less than the president’s request—from the aviation trust fund for modernization and improvement of air traffic control and airway facilities, experimental research and development facilities, and other improvements to enhance airport and airline safety.

**Research, Engineering, and Development.** The measure provides \$184 million—\$27.9 million more than in FY 2000 and equal to the president’s request—from the aviation trust fund for research to improve the air traffic control system and increase its capacity to meet air traffic demands of the future. It also finances the research, engineering, and development needed to modify federal air regulations.

**Airport Improvement Program.** H.R. 4475 provides \$2.6 billion during FY 2001—\$725 million more than the FY 2000 level and \$671 million more than the president’s budget—for grants for airport planning and development, noise compatibility and planning, the military airport program, reliever airports, and other authorized activities.

### **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

The measure provides \$30.7 billion in total budgetary resources from the highway trust fund for FHWA, \$1.9 billion more than in FY 2000 and \$343 million more than President Clinton’s request. The FHWA provides financial assistance to states to construct and improve roads and highways, enforce federal standards relating to interstate motor carriers and the highway transport of hazardous materials, and provide technical assistance to other agencies involved in road building activities. One of its goals is to coordinate the national highway system with other modes of transportation to ensure a comprehensive, balanced transportation system. The agency pays virtually all its expenses from the highway trust fund, including salaries, administrative expenses, and the highway bridge construction and rehabilitation programs. Created in 1957, the fund is financed by fuel taxes, including taxes on gasoline, gasohol, and diesel fuel. Funding for the agency is provided by contract authority, with program levels established by annual limitations on obligations in appropriations bills.

The bill (1) provides \$29.6 billion for the federal aid obligation limitation, \$464 million more than last year and equal to the president’s request; (2) limits spending on administrative expenses to \$290 million, an decrease of \$85 million from FY 2000 and \$25.7 million under the president’s request; (3) provides \$437 million for transportation research; and (4) \$177 million from the highway trust fund for motor carrier safety grants, \$72 million more than last year and \$10 million less than the president’s request. In total, the bill meets the levels specified in TEA 21.

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**

H.R. 4475 provides \$394.9 million in budgetary resources for NHTSA—\$181 million for operations and research activities and \$213 million for highway traffic safety grants—\$6.2 million more than last year and equal to the president’s request, for administrative costs, research programs, safety activities, and regulatory enforcement efforts. The agency administers a variety of traffic and safety programs, administers the national driver registry, and provides grants to states and communities to promote safety efforts, such as seatbelt and motorcycle helmet use and drunk driving prevention. The agency was established in 1970 as a separate entity within the Transportation Department.

## **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)**

The bill provides \$689.3 million in budgetary resources for FRA, \$45.5 million less than in FY 2000 and \$366 million under the president's request. The FRA is responsible for planning, developing, and administering programs to achieve safe operating and mechanical practices in the railroad industry. It also manages Amtrak, the high-speed ground transportation program, and offers financial assistance to rehabilitate and improve the railroad industry's physical plant. Specific programs are detailed below.

**Railroad Research and Development.** The bill allocates \$26.3 million, \$3.8 million less than last year and \$500,000 less than the president's request, to finance contract research activities and salaries and expenses for research to reduce the frequency and severity of railroad accidents, and to provide technical support for rail safety rulemaking and enforcement activities.

**Next Generation High Speed Rail.** H.R. 4475 provides \$22 million—\$5.1 million less than FY 2000 and equal to the president's request—to develop, demonstrate, and implement high speed rail technologies.

**Rhode Island Rail Development.** The bill fully funds the president's request of \$17 million, \$7 million more than FY 2000, for this rail project in the Northeast Corridor.

**Grants to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).** The measure appropriates \$521.5 million, \$49.5 million less than FY 2000 and equal to the president's request, for Amtrak to cover operating losses, retirement payments, capital expenses, and the Northeast Corridor Improvement program Amtrak typically borrows money from a private-sector line-of-credit near the end of each fiscal year to bridge the gap between its operating loss and federal financial assistance. Early in each new fiscal year, Amtrak repays the loan.

## **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

The bill appropriates \$6.3 billion for the FTA, \$485 million more than in FY 2000 and \$50 million less than the president's request. The FTA administers the federal financial assistance programs for planning, developing, and improving comprehensive mass transportation systems in urban and non-urban areas.

**Administrative Expenses.** H.R. 4475 appropriates \$64 million (\$4 million more than in FY 2000 and equal to the president's request) for FTA administrative expenses.

**Formula Grants.** The bill allocates \$3.3 billion (\$247 million more than in FY 2000 and equal to the president's request). FTA makes formula grants to states for capital and operating assistance to urban and non-urban areas, and capital assistance grants to organizations that provide service to elderly and disabled persons.

**University Transportation Centers.** The measure fully funds the president's request of \$6 million (equal to the FY 2000 level) to support university programs that conduct research, training, and development activities related to the transport of passengers and property.

**Transit Planning and Research.** H.R. 4475 appropriates \$110 million—\$3 million more than the FY 2000 level and equal to the president's request—for research, training, and human resources programs to enhance transportation technology and planning.

**Capital Investment Grants.** The measure provides \$2.6 billion, \$206 million more than last year and equal to the president's request, for bus and bus facilities, rail transit modernization projects, and new transit starts.

**Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants.** The bill allocates \$100 million for this program, \$25 million more than year's level and \$50 million less than the president's request. The program makes competitive grants to qualifying metropolitan planning organizations, local governmental authorities, agencies, and non-profit organizations in urbanized areas with populations greater than 200,000.

### **Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC)**

The bill appropriates \$13 million—\$1 million more than last year and equal to the president's request (although not as mandatory funding as the president requested)—from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for this government run corporation. SLSDC funds lock and maintenance operations, dredging, and planning and development activities necessary to maintain the U.S. portion of the Saint Lawrence Seaway.

### **Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA)**

The measure allocates \$77 million, \$9 million more than in FY 2000 and \$8 million less than the president's request. The RSPA has jurisdiction over hazardous materials, pipelines, international standards, emergency transportation, and university research. It provides research, analytical, and technical support for transportation programs. Specific programs include the following:

**Research and Special Programs.** The bill appropriates \$36 million—\$4.4 million more than last year and \$6 million less than the president's request—to administer a comprehensive nationwide safety program to (1) protect the nation from the risks inherent in the transportation of hazardous materials by water, air, highway, and rail; (2) oversee the execution of the secretary's statutory responsibilities to provide transportation services during national emergencies; and (3) coordinate DOT's research and development policy planning, university research, and technology transfer.

**Pipeline Safety.** The measure allocates \$42.6 million—\$35.8 million for the Pipeline Safety Fund and \$4.2 million for the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund—to (1) continue pipeline safety operations, research, and development, (2) develop and enforce federal safety regulations, and (3) administer a grants-in-aid program to state pipeline programs. This sum represents a \$5.7 million increase from FY 2000 and a \$4.5 million reduction from the president's request.

**Emergency Preparedness Grants.** The bill fully funds the president's request of \$200,000, which is equal to the FY 2000 level, for activities related to emergency response training curriculum development and updates.

### **Office of Inspector General**

H.R. 4475 appropriates \$48 million, \$3.4 million more than last year and equal to the president's request. Established in 1978 as an objective and independent office, the inspector general's mission is to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in department operations, and to keep the secretary and Congress informed of problems in programs and operations.

## Surface Transportation Board

Created by the 1995 Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act (*P.L. 104-88*), the Surface Transportation Board is responsible for regulating the rail and pipeline industries and certain non-licensing regulations of motor carriers and water carriers. The bill provides \$17 million, \$1.7 million more than last year's level. The President did not request any money for this program.

### — *Related Agencies* —

## Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board

H.R. 4475 fully funds the president's request of \$4.7 million (\$162,000 more than FY 2000) for the board to ensure compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act, which ensures that public buildings and transit vehicles provide easy accessibility to the physically handicapped, investigates alternative approaches to eliminating architectural barriers, and develops minimum guidelines and requirements for accessibility standards.

## National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

The bill provides \$62.9 million—\$5.9 million more than last year and equal to the president's request—for salaries and expenses of NTSB. The NTSB investigates accidents, conducts special studies, develops recommendations to prevent accidents, evaluates the effectiveness of safety programs, and reviews appeals of adverse actions involving airman and seaman licenses and civil penalties issued by DOT.

## Costs/Committee Action:

There is no CBO estimate on this legislation.

The Appropriations Committee reported the bill by voice vote on May 16, 2000.



*Jennifer Lord, 226-7860*

Eric Hultman: *Managing Editor*  
Brendan Shields: *Senior Legislative Analyst*

Courtney Haller, Jennifer Lord  
& Greg Mesack: *Legislative Analysts*

House  
REPUBLICAN  
Conference

Legislative  
Digest

<http://hillsource.house.gov/LegislativeDigest>